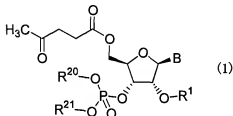


**CLAIMS AMENDMENTS**

This Listing of Claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Claim 1 (previously presented): A ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (1):

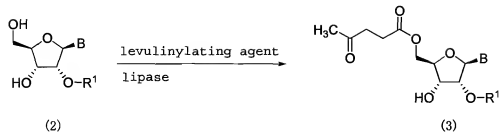


wherein B represents adenine, guanine, cytosine or uracil or a modified form thereof; R<sup>1</sup> represents a protecting group which can be removed at 90% or more at a temperature in the range from 0°C to 60°C under acidic conditions at a pH value from 2 to 4 within 24 hours; R<sup>20</sup> represents H or an alkyl which may be substituted; and R<sup>21</sup> represents an aryl which may be substituted or a monocyclic or bicyclic heterocyclic which may be substituted, or a salt thereof.

Claim 2 (original): The ribonucleic acid compound or a salt thereof according to claim 1, wherein R<sup>1</sup> is 2-tetrahydrofuranyl or 1,3-dioxolan-2-yl.

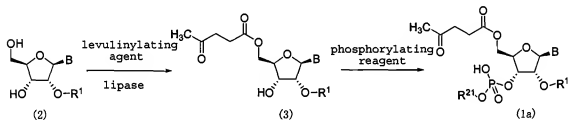
Claim 3 (currently amended): The ribonucleic acid compound or a salt thereof according to claim 1 or 2, wherein R<sup>20</sup> is H, 2-cyanoethyl or 2,2,2-trichloroethyl, and R<sup>21</sup> is 2-chlorophenyl or 2-chloro-4-tert-butylphenyl.

Claim 4 (previously presented): A method for producing a ribonucleic acid compound represented by the following general formula (3), comprising regioselectively levulinylating the hydroxyl at the 5'-position of a ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (2) by allowing a levulinylating agent and a lipase to act on the compound represented by general formula (2):



wherein B represents adenine, guanine, cytosine or uracil or a modified form thereof; and R<sup>1</sup> represents a protecting group which can be removed at 90% or more at a temperature in the range from 0°C to 60°C under acidic conditions at a pH value from 2 to 4 within 24 hours.

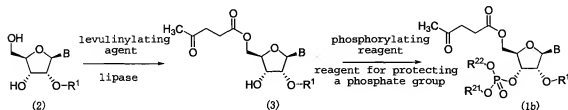
Claim 5 (currently amended): A method for producing a ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (1a), comprising allowing a phosphorylating reagent to act on a ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (3) produced by a production method including the step of regioselectively levulinylating the hydroxyl at the 5'-position of a ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (2) by allowing a levulinylating agent and a lipase to act on the compound represented by general formula (2):



wherein B represents adenine, guanine, cytosine or uracil or a modified form thereof; R<sup>1</sup> represents a protecting group which can be removed at 90% or more at a temperature in the range from 0°C to 60°C under acidic conditions at a pH value from 2 to 4 within 24 hours; and R<sup>21</sup> represents an aryl which may be substituted or a monocyclic or bicyclic heterocyclic which may be substituted.

Claim 6 (previously presented): A method for producing a ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (1b), comprising allowing a phosphorylating reagent and a reagent for protecting a phosphate group to act on a ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (3) produced by a production method including the step of regioselectively levulinylating the hydroxyl

at the 5'-position of a ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (2) by allowing a levulinylating agent and a lipase to act on the compound represented by general formula (2):



wherein B represents adenine, guanine, cytosine or uracil or a modified form thereof;  $R^1$  represents a protecting group which can be removed at 90% or more at a temperature in the range from 0°C to 60°C under acidic conditions at a pH value from 2 to 4 within 24 hours;  $R^{21}$  represents an aryl which may be substituted or a monocyclic or bicyclic heterocyclic which may be substituted; and  $R^{22}$  represents an alkyl which may be substituted.

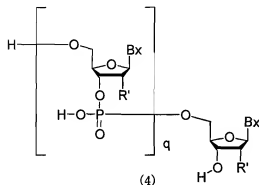
Claim 7 (currently amended): The method for producing a ribonucleic acid compound according to ~~claim 4 any one of claims 4 to 6~~, wherein  $R^1$  is 2-tetrahydrofuranyl or 1,3-dioxolan-2-yl.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The method for producing a ribonucleic acid compound according to ~~claim 4 any one of claims 4 to 7~~, wherein the levulinylating agent is levulinic acid, levulinic anhydride, a levulinate ester or a ~~levulinoyl halide halide levulinate~~.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The method for producing a ribonucleic acid compound according to ~~claim 5 any one of claims 5 to 8~~, wherein the phosphorylating reagent is 2-chlorophenyl phosphoroditriazolide, 2-chlorophenyl-O,O-bis(1-benzotriazolyl)phosphate or 2-chloro-4-tert-butylphenyl phosphoroditriazolide.

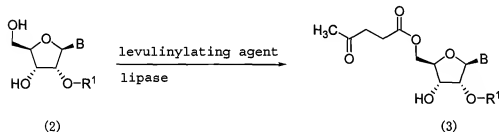
Claim 10 (currently amended): The method for producing a ribonucleic acid compound according to ~~claim 6 any one of claims 6 to 9~~, wherein the reagent for protecting a phosphate group is 3-hydroxypropionitril or 2,2,2-trichloroethanol.

Claim 11 (previously presented): A liquid-phase synthesis method for an oligonucleotide compound represented by general formula (4):



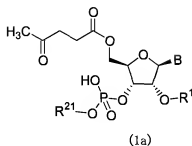
wherein each Bx independently represents adenine, guanine, cytosine, uracil or thymine or a modified form thereof; q represents an integer in the range from 1 to 100; at least one of R' is hydroxyl and the others represent independently H or hydroxyl, comprising the following steps (a) to (f):

(a) producing a ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (3) by regioselectively levulinylating the hydroxyl at the 5'-position of a ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (2) by allowing a levulinylating agent and a lipase to act on the compound represented by general formula (2):



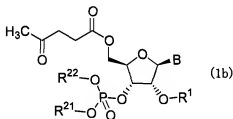
wherein B represents adenine, guanine, cytosine or uracil or a modified form thereof; and R<sup>1</sup> represents a protecting group which can be removed at 90% or more at a temperature in the range from 0°C to 60°C under acidic conditions at a pH value from 2 to 4 within 24 hours;

(b) producing a ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (1a) by phosphorylating the hydroxyl at the 3'-position of the compound represented by general formula (3) by allowing a phosphorylating reagent to act on the compound represented by general formula (3) produced by step (a):



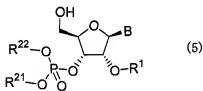
wherein B and R<sup>1</sup> are as defined above; and R<sup>21</sup> represents aryl which may be substituted or a monocyclic or bicyclic heterocyclic group which may be substituted;

(c) producing, separately from step (b), a ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (1b) by allowing a phosphorylating reagent and a reagent for protecting a phosphate group to act on the compound represented by general formula (3) produced by step (a):



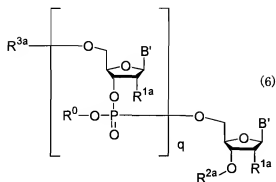
wherein B, R<sup>1</sup>, and R<sup>21</sup> are as defined above; and R<sup>22</sup> represents alkyl which may be substituted;

(d) producing a ribonucleic acid compound represented by general formula (5) by deprotecting levulinyl of the compound represented by general formula (1b) produced by step (c):

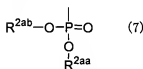


wherein B, R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>21</sup> and R<sup>22</sup> are as defined above;

(e) producing an oligonucleotide compound represented by general formula (6) by stepwise oligomerization using as a monomer component, at least one of the ribonucleic acid compounds represented by general formulas (1a) and (5) produced by steps (b) and (d), respectively:



wherein each B' independently represents adenine, guanine, cytosine, uracil or thymine or a modified form thereof; each R<sup>0</sup> independently represents H, aryl which may be substituted or a monocyclic or bicyclic heterocyclic group which may be substituted; R<sup>3a</sup> represents H, levulinyl or 4,4'-dimethoxytrityl; q is as defined above; at least one of R<sup>1a</sup> is hydroxyl substituted with a protecting group which can be removed at 90% or more at a temperature in the range from 0°C to 60°C under acidic conditions at a pH value from 2 to 4 within 24 hours, and the others independently represent H or hydroxyl substituted with a protecting group which can be removed at 90% or more at a temperature in the range from 0°C to 60°C under acidic conditions at a pH value from 2 to 4 within 24 hours; and R<sup>2a</sup> represents acyl or a phosphate group represented by general formula (7):



wherein R<sup>2aa</sup> represents aryl which may be substituted or a monocyclic or bicyclic heterocyclic group which may be substituted; and R<sup>2ab</sup> represents H or alkyl which may be substituted; and

(f) deprotecting all the protecting groups of the oligonucleotide compound represented by general formula (6) produced by step (e).

Claim 12 (original): The liquid-phase synthesis method for an oligonucleotide compound according to claim 11, wherein R<sup>1</sup> is 2-tetrahydrofuranyl or 1,3-dioxolan-2-yl.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The liquid-phase synthesis method for an oligonucleotide compound according to claim 11 ~~or 12~~, wherein q is an integer in the range from 1 to 100.

Claim 14 (currently amended): The liquid-phase synthesis method for an oligonucleotide compound according to claim 11 ~~any one of claims 11 to 13~~, wherein q is an integer in the range from 10 to 50.

Claim 15 (currently amended): The liquid-phase synthesis method for an oligonucleotide compound according to claim 11 ~~any one of claims 11 to 14~~, wherein the levulinylating agent is levulinic acid, levulinic anhydride, a levulinate ester or a levulinoyl halide ~~halide levulinate~~.

Claim 16 (currently amended): The liquid-phase synthesis method for an oligonucleotide compound according to claim 11 ~~any one of claims 11 to 15~~, wherein the phosphorylating reagent is 2-chlorophenyl phosphoroditriazolid, 2-chlorophenyl-O,O-bis(1-benzotriazolyl)phosphate or 2-chloro-4-tert-butylphenyl phosphoroditriazolid.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The liquid-phase synthesis method for an oligonucleotide compound according to claim 11 ~~any one of claims 11 to 16~~, wherein the reagent for protecting a phosphate group is 3-hydroxypropionitril or 2,2,2-trichloroethanol.

Claim 18 (new): The method for producing a ribonucleic acid compound according to claim 5, wherein R<sup>1</sup> is 2-tetrahydrofuranyl or 1,3-dioxolan-2-yl.

Claim 19 (new): The method for producing a ribonucleic acid compound according to claim 5, wherein the levulinylating agent is levulinic acid, levulinic anhydride, a levulinate ester or a levulinoyl halide.

Claim 20 (new): The method for producing a ribonucleic acid compound according to claim 6, wherein R<sup>1</sup> is 2-tetrahydrofuranyl or 1,3-dioxolan-2-yl.

Claim 21 (new): The method for producing a ribonucleic acid compound according to claim 6, wherein the levulinylating agent is levulinic acid, levulinic anhydride, a levulinate ester or a levulinoyl halide.

Claim 22 (new): The method for producing a ribonucleic acid compound according to claim 6, wherein the phosphorylating reagent is 2-chlorophenyl phosphoroditriazolidine, 2-chlorophenyl-O,O-bis(1-benzotriazolyl)phosphate or 2-chloro-4-tert-butylphenyl phosphoroditriazolidine.